

REMARKS

Claims 1, 14 and 21-24 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 14 are amended, claims 2-5, 7-13 and 15-20 are cancelled and claims 21-24 are added. In particular, the allowable features of claims 9 and 16 have been incorporated into claims 1 and 14, respectively, and allowable claims 10, 11, 17 and 18 have been amended into independent form (claims 21-24).

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the Amendment: (a) places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) does not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration; (c) does not add any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (d) places the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the Amendment is thus respectfully requested.

An Election of Species was required and Applicants elected Fig. 6. Claims 1, 14 and 21-24 read on the elected Figure. Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application based on the non-elected claims.

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable features in claims 9-11 and 16-18. By this Amendment, each of the allowable claims have been placed into independent form.

The rejections of claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, claims 1, 2, 8, 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and claims 12, 13, 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fuwa et al. (Fuwa), U.S. Patent No. 6,345,496, have been rendered moot.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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